

**McCue, Kevin**

**From:** Glenn & Laurie Hockett [glhockett@bresnan.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 20, 2011 12:15 PM  
**To:** facey\_tom@hotmail.com; grt3177@smtel.com; McCue, Kevin; senatorbrenden@gmail.com; steve.gallus@gmail.com; wranglergallery@hotmail.com; Art Wittich; Greg Hinkle; joebalyeat@yahoo.com; Larry Jent  
**Cc:** GWA Board  
**Subject:** Senate Bill 144

Dear Senate Fish & Game Committee Members:

Please enter this comment into the official record regarding Senate Bill 144.

On behalf of the Gallatin Wildlife Association, please oppose SB 144, which intends to hamstring any meaningful attempts to restore and conserve wild bison as a valued native big game species in Montana.

We recognize that wild bison restoration and conservation efforts in Montana will be challenging, but it is an effort that is long overdue. There are only so many places that such an effort has a reasonable chance for success. However, the possibilities are real and worthy of in depth public dialog. Unfortunately, SB 144 prevents any cooperative discussion to proceed on where and what the possibilities are for wild bison in Montana.

Some private landowners and tribal interests have already invested substantially in potential bison restoration efforts. These entities have expressed a strong interest in working together across jurisdictions to restore and conserve wild bison as valued native wildlife. Public land and wildlife management agencies have also expressed interest in working together and they have a responsibility to provide habitat and conserve native species for all Montanans and U.S. citizens. As hunters, we support wild bison restoration and conservation through regulated public hunting, and along with numerous other wildlife advocates we see the benefits and important role wild bison will fulfill in the Plains ecology and economy.

We view SB 144 as a divisive ultimatum that is anti-private property rights, anti-public wildlife, anti-hunting, anti-cooperation and anti-tribal interests. Wild bison will supplement and diversify Montana's environment and economy. We support Montana's efforts to restore and conserve wild bison as a valued native big game species to our great State and we therefore oppose SB 144 and request that you please table this bill.

Sincerely,

Glenn Hockett  
Volunteer President, Gallatin Wildlife Association